

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 032672

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFORPN

SUBJECT:U.S. PANAMA TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: ACTIVITIES REPORT

FOR MINISTER BELL AND GENERAL DOLVIN.

I.

THIS IS MESSAGE NO. 2 FROM THE DEPARTMENT APPLICABLE TO THE
FEBRUARY 1976 NEGOTIATING ROUND IN PANAMA, DESPATCHED FROM
ARA/PAN AT 5:30 PM ON FEBRUARY 10.

II. BRIEFING ITEMS

A. "CONSOLIDATION PAPER" -- PER YOUR REQUEST, WE LDXED A
COPY OF BELL'S "CONSOLIDATION PAPER" TO ADMIRAL CARR IN DEP
SECRETARY CLEMENTS' OFFICE ON 2/9. ISA SUBSEQUENTLY
REQUESTED COPY, WHICH WE HAVE PROVIDED.

B. RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM VICE PRESIDENT OF PACIFIC CIVIC
COUNCIL -- AT ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS' REQUEST, WE
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PREPARED A LETTER FOR HIS SIGNATURE RESPONDING TO MRS.

FULTON, VICE PRESIDENT OF PACIFIC CIVIC COUNCIL IN THE CANAL ZONE. AS YOU RECALL, MRS. FULTON SENT A LETTER TO SECRETARY ROGERS IN LATE JANUARY OUTLINING HER FEARS ABOUT WELFARE OF US CITIZENS IF CANAL ZONE IS PLACED UNDER PANAMANIAN JURISDICTION. WE DISCUSSED DRAFT RESPONSE WITH TOM CONSTANT AND COL. CRITTENDEN. BOTH AGREED WITH GENERAL TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF LETTER, WHICH BASICALLY ADHERES TO SUBSTANCE OF AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S STATEMENTS REGARDING NEGOTIATORS OBJECTIVE TO PROTECT RIGHTS FOR US PERSONNEL WHO WORK FOR CANAL COMPANY OR LIVE IN CANAL ZONE. WILL POUCH COPY OF LETTER TO BLACKEN WHEN SIGNED.

C. Q&A FOR SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE -- WE DRAFTED Q&A FOR THE SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE NOW TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 11. SINCE IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE QUESTIONS AT THE CONFERENCE WILL FOCUS ON HIS LATIN AMERICAN TRIP, WE HAVE PROVIDED A SUGGESTED ANSWER WHICH IS KEYED TO THE HEMISPHERIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE EFFECT WHICH AN EVENTUAL TREATY WILL HAVE ON OUR RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA. THE SUGGESTED RESPONSE DRAWS FROM THE GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR THE SECRETARY'S CALIFORNIA TRIP, MENTIONS IN SUBSTANCE THE FACT THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS ON CONTADORA, THAT SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, BUT THAT A NUMBER OF MAJOR ISSUES REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED.

III. ACTION ITEMS

CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS.

THE FOLLOWING LETTER (DATED JANUARY 30, 1976) FROM MRS. SULLIVAN TO AMBASSADOR BUNKER WAS RECEIVED ON FEBRUARY 10. LETTER READS: QUOTE. THE COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES, WHICH I CHAIR, AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE PANAMA CANAL, CHAIRED BY MY DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE, RALPH METCALFE, ARE VERY CONCERNED WITH MANY OF THE RECENT EVENTS ON THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA AND THEIR DIRECT OR INDIRECT EFFECTS ON THE OPERATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CANAL ZONE. SINCE THE CANAL AND CANAL ZONE ARE UNDER THE COMMITTEE'S AND SUBCOMMITTEE'S LEGISLATIVE

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AND OVERSIGHT JURISDICTION, AND SINCE APPARENTLY WE ARE AT A STAGE IN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS WHICH COULD WELL BE AFFECTED BY RECENT INTERNAL EVENTS IN PANAMA, MANY OF US ARE DESIROUS THAT YOU AND YOUR APPROPRIATE STATE DEPARTMENT COLLEAGUES APPEAR BEFORE US TO REVIEW RECENT EVENTS ON THE ISTHMUS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CANAL, THE CANAL ZONE, AND TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE MR. METCALFE IS ABSENT FROM WASHINGTON, I AM OFFICIALLY REQUESTING THAT YOU APPEAR

BEFORE US AT WHAT WILL HOPEFULLY BE A FAIRLY CONVENIENT
TIME FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED.

IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, MR. AMBASSADOR, IF YOUR OFFICE COULD
INFORM EITHER COUNSEL OR PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE OR SUBCOMMITTEE OF THOSE TIMES AT WHICH YOU WILL
BE AVAILABLE. A RAPID REPLY WOULD BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.
WE REALIZE THE SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE TREATY
NEGOTIATORS MUST WORK. END QUOTE.

IN CONVERSATION TODAY WITH STAFF MEMBER MODGLIN, HE
CLARIFIED THAT PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF LETTER IS TO ESTABLISH
HEARING DATE CONVENIENT TO AMBASSADOR BUNKER. ONCE DATE
IS SET, COMMITTEE'S INTENTION IS THAT MR. VEYSEY AND
GOVERNOR PARFITT ALSO TESTIFY. AS YET, NO DECISION HAS
BEEN MADE REGARDING POSSIBLE TESTIMONY OF CIVIC COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVES.

MODGLIN ANTICIPATES THAT COMMITTEE WOULD PROBABLY DECIDE
TO HOLD HEARINGS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION. HE INDICATED THAT
CONGRESSMAN METCALFE WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR HEARINGS
UNTIL LATE MARCH BUT THOUGHT THAT MRS. SULLIVAN'S PRE-
FERENCE WOULD BE FOR HEARINGS TO PROCEED AT EARLIER DATE
CONVENIENT TO AMBASSADOR BUNKER.

MODGLIN NOTED THAT CANAL COMPANY BUDGET HEARINGS ARE
SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 25/26 AND IMPLIED THAT SOME DATE
AROUND THE 27TH MIGHT BE CONVENIENT FOR PRINCIPALS
INVOLVED IN HEARING.

ACTION REQUESTED. -- IF YOU CONCUR, WE WILL DRAFT REPLY TO
MRS. SULLIVAN ON BEHALF OF AMBASSADOR BUNKER, PROPOSING
WHATEVER DATE HE CONSIDERS MOST CONVENIENT. SUGGEST,
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HOWEVER, THAT DATE BE AFTER SECRETARY'S LATIN AMERICA
TRIP. KISSINGER

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